

THE  
SOBER CONFORMISTS  
ANSWER TO A  
RIGID CONFORMISTS  
REASONS.

Why in this Juncture no Alteration should be made in the  
GOVERNMENT  
of the CHURCH of

SCOTLAND.

Prov. 26. 4. *Answer not a Fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.*

Verse 5. *Answer a Fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own Conceit.*

M. D. Dickson, *Papists hate nothing in Prelacy but what is Presbyterian, and Presbyterians hate nothing in it but what is Popish.*

M. R. Blair, *The Bishops of England are like the Kings of Judah, some good some bad. The Bishops of Scotland are like the Kings of Israel, not a good one amongst them all.*

[William Ker]

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# R E A S O N S

Why in this Juncture no Alteration should be made in the

## G O V E R N M E N T

Of the C H U R C H of

## S C O T L A N D

**Reason I.** *Because Episcopal Government has not only the Advantage of Apostolick Constitution and Natural Reception by all Christian Churches from CHRIST to Calvin, but also is found by Experience to be the best Adapted for preservation of Order, Peace and Unity.*

**Rea. 2.** *Because the most of the Gentry and Burgeses have taken the Test, and therefore can never without perjury vote for the Introduction of Presbytry, or chuse such a Commissioner as may be suspected to favour that way.*

**Rea. 3.** *If Presbytry be voted, then returns upon you the Solemn League and Covenant, as is evident not only from the present proceedings of the Presbyterian Preachers, but also from the Natural Exigence of the thing, it not being possible to conceive a Foundation for parity without it, and if the Covenant return then, beside the many impieties of that Oath, it must make the most considerable of the Nation either perjured or miserable; And no Man can have any publick place either in Church or State, but such as shall do penance for taking the Test; and not only so, but a great part of the Laity of the Nation, must be reduced to great straits, both in reference to Conscience and Interest, and the present Regular Clergy be turned out, which will reduce the Church to such Amazing Hardships, that the Gospel shall not be preached in three parts of the Kingdom, there not being an hundred qualified Presbyterians in the Kingdom.*

**Rea. 4.** *Because if presbytry shall not be thus established in its integrity but all that Alteration turn to a Non-Episcopacy, and the present Presbyters continue in their Offices, then our deplorable Schisms and Divisions, will continue without a remedy, or else the Magistrate will take the Government of the Church upon him, and we must have downright Erastianism.*

**Rea. 5.** *Because the establishment of Presbytry will have a most pernicious influence upon the Protestant Religion in this Island if ever Popery set up its head. For the Churches of England and Scotland must stand on different bottoms, & so will be obliged to justify themselves by different Ar-*

guments, which will prove very hard for Scotland, seeing Presbytry will divide it from England, which opens a door to the re-entry of Popery, which cannot but alienate the Affections of the Church of England from us, which considering our own weakness will expose us a prey to the common Enemy.

Rea. 6. To be for Presbytry in this Juncture will exceedingly disoblige the Princess of Orange, whose principles are known to all Europe in this matter, and the Prince also who has no inclination for the Alteration of the Government of the Church, as he hath now abundantly declared.

Rea. 7: Let all thinking Men but reflect upon the Natural Tempter of Presbytry, and view it in its Tyrannical, pragmatick, Medling and Domineering effects which many good Men yet living of all Qualities have severely felt. Let them likewise consider the Hypocrisie, immorality and Antichristian genius of that party, and then let them vote for it if they think fit.

Rea. 8: If the Church of England continue as it is (as undoubtedly it will) and Scotland be reduced to Presbytry, then considering the boundless and restless spirit of Presbytry, Scotland will impose, sicut ante, an uniformity in Doctrine and Discipline upon that Nation, which will commence a new Civil War, the thoughts of which cannot but breed horror in all reasonable Men.



SIR,

I F the wounds of a Friend be better than the kisses of an Enemy, they should be far more acceptable then the wounds of an Enemy; And therefore I expect ye will not be displeased with my Freedom in this line designed for preventing your more severe and shameful Treatment, by our *Adversaries* to whom ye have given great advantage, by some *Reasons* ye have written [*why in this Juncture there should be no Alteration of the Government of the Church of Scotland*] of baffling our cause so unseasonably and weakly defended by you. For albeit there are many *saber Presbyterians* whose generous compassion of our present staggering condition, would not allow them to give you such an humbling Repartee, as ye give too large ground for, yet as we deserve it not at their hand, who have been so cruel to them in their low condition; so we cannot expect it from every one of them, especially, when they are at once encouraged, by the many Disadvantages of our present circumstances, and irritated by your extreme bitterness against them, and therefore I advise you would recall all the copies of it, which I am hopeful have not yet spread far, for ingenuously they are so weak, that few of our persuasion will be at the pains to transcribe them, and I think they will be more careful of our Reputation then to suffer them to come to the hands of any *Presbyterian*, as through time they may, if you prevent it not. But lest your vanity make you confidently contemn my counsel; I shall take a little pains to abate your confidence, by shewing you how easily and advantageously our *Adversaries* with whom I have frequent converse can answer you.

But I must first exprels my Dissatisfaction with the title ye give your paper so lyable to the most perplexing Exceptions can be made against us. I doubt not but ye have heard ( I have heard it so often ) how lamentably *Arch-Bishop P.* was baffled of late by Mr. Roger at *Glasgow*, upon the like occasion given him; We are too conscious to our selves, that the sole support of our interest is but *Civil Laws* ( though the *Bishops* were at the making them ) and that all *Ecclesiastick Authority* is on their side; And therefore ye would be inextricably puzzled, if they put the Question to you, Which of the two is the Government of the *Church of Scotland*, that which is only introduced by *Civil Laws*, without any *Ecclesiastick Authority*, contrary to the standing Laws of the Church, never yet repealed by any *Church Judicature*, or that which is established by many National Assemblies of the Church, though contrar to posteriour Acts of Parliament, made without any consequent, far less Antecedent Determination of any Church Judicatory.

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They may likewise give you an unanswerable challenge of monopolizing the specious name of the [ *Church of Scotland* ] to us ( excluding them ) because we have receded from old standing *Ecclesiastick Laws* without any other warrant then *new Civil Laws* contrary to them ; and upon that account charge us with *Schism & unwarrantable separation* from them, having no Evasion left us, but that we are the more numerous part of the Clergy, which scarce makes our Separation tolerable, far less justifiable.

But that which is as unbecoming us, as unacceptable to them, is your pleading [ *no Alteration* ] which will stumble your Readers with prejudice in the very entry, For how ever difficult it be to prove the necessity of such an intire Alteration, as *Presbyterians* desire, yet they can easily pitch upon many things, which we cannot ingenuously deny should be altered ; And the book entituled the *Reformed Bishop*, written by one of our Clergy, opens a wide door to them ; Yea, we are all of us too sensible, that our interest has been scrued up to so dangerous heights, by the Laws, that there is no stable Basis left to establish it in the Consciences of those who own it ; And we have Reason to fear lest those odious superstructures of the Magistrates unbounded *Supremacy* over the *Church*, such rigorous impositions on the Consciences of Subjects, and so cruel persecution of all Dissenters ( which by an excess of Zeal we have erected, to be the securities of our cause ) may so much discommend the whole Fabric of our Government, as to endanger the total ruine thereof. And I have alwayes thought it a great flaw in the *Episcopal Government* in *Scotland*, that as it hath been built upon no other Foundation, and advanced by no other Methods then *Civil Laws* rigorously executed, so these are framed in such an *Arbitrary* and persecuting stile, that the least turn of Affairs will render them as odious as before they were grievous to all moderate and judicious Men of both parties.

And finally, it surpasseth my imagination, what hath encouraged you to add [ *in this Juncture ?* ] Its evident that the whole present Juncture of Affairs hath a bad Aspect on us, and we can expect little Favour from such as duely consider the same. What hath insatuated you to such an unaccountable confidence ? Alace ! your Reasons can never cancel these unhappy Addressses to the King, so fresh in the remembrance of all Men ; That of the *Primate* sent to King in name of the Clergy, to thank him for the Liberty granted to the *Papists*, so full of base *sycophantry*, and *abject flattery*, that even the *Papish King* was ashamed of it, which I fear be printed at *Edinburgh* before the Convention, though ye tempt them not

to the remembrance of it, and that other most unseasonable Testimony of our Loyalty, expressing our Detestation of the *P. of Orange* his coming to *England*, as an unjust and unnatural Invasion; signed by the *Bps* to their eternal shame. Neither will ever this Paper of yours counterpoise the *P. of Orange*, His Declaration in reference to *Scotland*, wherein we are represented as the grievance of the Nation, and the necessity of an Alteration, insinuated as clearly as could be done without directly reflecting on our Laws, which though he doth not approve, yet he judgeth unseasonable as yet to condemn. Nor Finally can all ye say for our vindication, outcry the loud voice of the Rigorous Persecution, and violent Oppression, and innumerable Grievances, which may be too justly charged on our party, and the *Presbyterians* are too apt to represent and aggrudge so, as to extort pity and compassion, even from the hardest hearted of our *Grandies* without such an irritating remembrance as you are.

But to come to your Reasons, *Presbyterians* will think them weak enough, though ye had not wronged them by such a vain Title. I wish ye had forbore the first which is too *Theologicke*, and so not only discovers the Author to be of the *Clergy*, who are little regarded when pleading for their own Interest, but doth also give our *Adversaries* too large a Field wherein they are best acquainted and most expert. Ye might have satisfied your self only with *Politick* Arguments, which are the most proper and suitable to our cause, and would seem to be the Sentiments of some Judicious Person of another Quality agenting it, and so be a great deal more acceptable and considered with the less prejudice. But I see no kind of reason in your Paper which *Presbyterians* cannot answer without any difficulty and with great advantage.

Your first Reason hath three things in it, which though it be sufficient simply to deny because meerly asserted, yet our *Adversaries* will not pass them so bluntly, they give too fair an occasion to them, of giving the sharpest and sorest wounds to our cause that it can meet with, and of prepossessing men's Consciences with such evident Convictions in their favour, as will render all your other Reasons ineffectual for perswading them to favour us.

The 1. thing in it is ( *That Episcopacy hath the advantage of Apostolick Constitution,* ) a very fair Plea and plausible Pretence, which ye would exceedingly oblige, the greater and better part of your Brethren, by making good; But how can we expect this of you, when the Learned *Hamond*, who excells all that ever took that Plea in hand for him notwithstanding

withstanding all his wrested Criticisms of Scripture, and stretched Allegations from Antiquity, hath not fully satisfied us in this point; so that all the Sober and Learned among us, except a very few Judge Church Government a point of *Indifferency*, not peremptorily determined by Christ or His Apostles, and that *Episcopacy* is preferable only for its Convenience; And whether the Report be true that *Dr. Burnet* hath acknowledged its Inconvenience for *Scotland*, I know not; But I have heard some of the most Judicious of our *Clergy* ingenuously confess, that though to a People unbiassed with prejudices as in *England* that were to chuse their Church Government, *Episcopacy* is preferable to *Presbytery*, yet to the People of *Scotland* ( who are possessed with such invincible prejudices in favours of *Presbytry* as the Church Government, which commenced with their Reformation from Popery, and has been established by so many full and free Church Judicatories; and Ratified by the Civil Sanction of three successive Parliaments, wherein three Kings successively were Personally present, and with no less Insuperable prejudices against *Episcopacy* as a Relict of Popery which amongst other corruptions they were Reformed from, and as an Innovation Introduced, Advanced and Established by Arbitrary and Violent Methods, not only without but against the Consent of the Ministry; and finally as an encouragement of Ignorance, Profanity and Error to the paving the way for Popery ) to such a prejudiced and byassed People *Episcopacy* is both inconvenient and intolerable. And *Presbyterians* do so well know, that the sentiments of many of your Brethren, differ from yours in this point, that they will not only ridicule you as Ignorant of the Scriptures, wherein the Names of Bishop and Presbyter are used indifferently as signifying the same thing; nothing given in direction to the ordinaty Officers of the Church, is peculiarly applicable to *Diocesan Bishops*, yea, and the Superiority of one Pastour above another, is expressly prohibited both by Christ in the Gospel and *Peter* in his Epistle, but they will also insult over you as impudent, in pretending that for your vindication, which not only the Generality of the Learned among the Clergy; but all the greatest of our Champions also as *Bancroft, Bilson, Law, Sutcliffe, Whitgift, Hooker, &c.* do deny to be clear or concludent in our Favours; undervaluing this Topick most laboriously as being conscious, it is against them asserting, that Apostolick Institutions of Church Government, do not take away the Indifferency and Mutability of it according to the convenience of every particular Church. And as for these few Learned men, who maintain the *Divine Right of Episcopacy* they do ingenuously confess, that there is no *Episcopacy* in any Church;

Church, now which doth not in many things Deviate from the *Primitive Episcopacy* which they own; and they will readily acknowledge, that *Episcopacy* as it is constitute in *Scotland*, either as to its Elevation to such an hight of Superiority and Power over *Presbyters*, or its complication with such evils *Erasianism*, or its Conjunction with civil Dignities, and Characters is not only quite Different from it, but directly opposit to it, So that it is the hight of Impudence to have pleaded no alteration from the Topick of Apostolick Institution, which doth so evidently prove the necessity of an Alteration even in the sense that both Parties have of it; and it is scarce so excusable as the confidence of some of our Writers, who doubt not to say roundly, that albeit *Episcopacy* was not the Government of the Church in its Infancy, yet it is better suited to it in its present Maturity, which though it be not a sufficient ground of preferring humane Inventions before *Divine Institutions*, yet is less intolerable because it hath some shaddows and collour of Reason for it; And after the great light, that these *Famous Presbyterians*, *Blondell* and *Salmasius*, *Parker* and *Didoclavius* have given, to the advantage of *Presbytry*, in this controversie, is the only shift left us to evade the Force of their Arguments, both from Scripture and Antiquity against us.

The next thing ye assert is, that [*Episcopacy* hath the Advantage of a Natural Reception by all Christian Churches from CHRIST to *Calvin*] Sir, Your Phrase of a Natural Reception is so Dark and Ambiguous that they will put what sense on't they will, and perhaps deride you and it both, by confessing that *Episcopacy* had a great advantage of Reception from the natural (Corrupt and Carnal) Reasonings and Inclinations of Men who are naturally Ignorant, that the Excellency of all the means of the Churches Edification is their Institution by a Supernatural *Divine Wisdom* and *Authority*, because they are not only adapted to *Supernatural ends*, but depend intirely for their Efficacy upon a *Supernatural Divine Power* and *Blessing*; and who are naturally no less Arrogant to add the Invention of their own vain Wisdom, as no less useful and necessary, and to expect *Gods Blessing* thereupon which he hath promised only to his own Institutions. But albeit they put a more Fabourable sense on your Words as importing an Early and easie Reception, yet they will not only retort, that several acknowledged corruptions had as easie reception as it, and far more early then such an *Episcopacy* as this of ours, which (taking it complexly) we our selves cannot deny would have been odious and intolerable in the *Primitive Church*, but they can likewise quite enervate your Argument, by proposing to your consideration the Gradual and Insensible Progress of the *Mystery of Iniquity*, which



the Apostles observed to have begun its motion, and to be mysteriously working even in their time, and therefore could not be much regarded yea scarce observed in the *primitive Church*, so full of unexperienced simplicity and extended Charity, wherein there were many Pastours so Eminent for their Wisdom & Gravity, Holiness and Humility, as seemed to challenge, and easily obtained more then ordinary Deterrence and Respect from their Brethren, and that from one Degree to another, untill at last through time the Church degenerated into a *Prelatick Government*, which could not be unacceptable or at least intolerable to the Generality, being so well suited to the Superstitious (the Predominant) Genius of these Times, though it past not altogether without a witness from some of the most Learned and seeing Men then living, who were not so much incerted with the common distemper of the Age they lived in but that they could both look back to the *Primitive purity and parity from which Episcopacy had declined*, and forward to the Papal corruption and Tyranny, to which it insensibly and gradually tended as it should; at large by *Blondel* and *Salmasius*. to the full conviction of all who read their Labourious Writings. Yea, they will not only Enervate your Argument, but turn the edge of it upon your self, by instancing the *Albigenses* who preserved the *Presbyterian Government* from the Apostles time to *Luther*, and whose Testimony against *Diocesan Episcopacy* is as strong, as it is by our own Confession against other *Romish* corruptions. Nay! they will come nearer home and cite credible History, narrating *Scotland* not to have received *Episcopal Government* for some hundreds of years after it received the *Christian Religion*, as not only *Bucchannan* our famous Historian sheweth, but our own great Doctor *Forbes* confesseth in his *Irenicon*. And finally they will foil this Argument quite, by shewing *Episcopacy* to have met with a more early and easie Ejection out of the Church when it was Reformed from corruptions, as a Native step of its Reformation, then ever it had reception by the Church, even when declining from its ancient Purity. And though *England* hath continued *Episcopal*, yet they will ask what reason is there for Justifying the the *Episcopal Government*, more then Her Ceremonious Worship, and why may not that Church be condemned for retaining the one as well as the other? and they have too evident grounds for imputing their Contumacious to the stiffness of *Q. Elizabeth* as the Chief, if not the sole hindrance of the Ejection of both out of *England*, as well as the other Reformed Churches; which was earnestly desired by the most Learned and Pious Divines in the Church, though when they found their endeavours fruitless, they choosed rather to comply therewith then disturb

sturb the Peace of the Church and Kingdom.

The last thing in this Reason is that [Episcopacy is by Experience found to be the best adapted for preservation of Order, Peace and Unity.] Presbyterians will hiss the Argument out of doors, because its the very same which Papists use against Protestants for justifying the Papal power. And it is more easie for them to retort our answer to Papists on our selves, then for us to Evade the Force of them without either derogating from the Episcopal power, which we maintain against Presbyterians or Homologating the Papal power which Papists maintain against Protestants. We grant the Papal power to be very much Adapted for Wordly Pomp, Power and Policy, but upon that very score deny it to be a Government becoming the Church, because Christ expressly dischargeth his Apostles, and in them all their Successors to exercise Dominion as the Lords of the Gentiles do over them. This Answer to Papists is an Argument so plate against our selves, that ingenuously I am not fully satisfied with our subtile Evasions of it. And though that of Dr. Burnets in his Latter Dialogues be the best I have yet seen, that nothing is prohibited in these words, but the Exercise of Civil Power by any Church Officer, over the Church; and so nothing of the Papal power is condemned by it, but the Usurpation of a Temporal Dominion over Princes; Yet seeing this leaves his Ecclesiastick Supremacy, (under which the subtile Jesuits Compiize all the Power he Exercises) untouched and uncondemned, by the clearest Scripture Argument we have against it, which all Reformed Divines make use of: even the Episcopal themselves) in their writings against the Papal Tyranny in Ecclesiasticks as well as Civils, I nothing doubt but the present Zeal of that great Man against Popery, would disclaim this evasion frankly as the effect of his former eagerness against Presbytery, hurrying him to a Criticism so favourable to Popery. And when I have considered the extent of the Paralel place, 1. Pet. 5. 3. and the particular Application in Reference to Spirituals, which the Apostle Paul makes, 2. Cor. 1. last; I cannot look upon that otherwise then an oversight in the Doctor, notwithstanding of my singular Esteem of Him and his Writings. But the truth is (if we consider seriously) the aptitude of Episcopacy, for preserving the Dignity and promoting the Interest of the Clergy; its similitude to the Civil Government, and Conformity to the Carnal conceits men have of the Church of God, are (even as it fares with Popery,) both its greatest advantage and disadvantage, its greatest advantage recommending it to Carnal men, who measure all things by their Carnal Imaginations and Inclinations, and its greatest disadvantage discommending it to Conscientious men

who measure all the concerns of the Church ; by the *unerring Rule of the Word of GOD*, and judge of them by their influence on, and usefulness for the Edification of their Souls. And alace ! the odious effects of *Episcopacy* in *Scotland*, especially since it was last introduced, are so recent and obvious, that if any witty *Presbyterian* shall be at the pains, to rake up this *Dunghil*, I am afraid such an intolerable stink shall be raised, as no *Aptitude* which our Government hath to what is good, or can pretend to have, will be either Regarded or Believed by any who are Judicious, far less Sober and Conscientious. For Sense and Experience are more convincing than all the Reasons in the World.

But to be more particular, ye say, [ *its found by Experince to be the best adapted for preservation of Order* ] *Presbyterians* will answer, That what ever be its apparent *Aptitude* for this, yet it is in effect, it self an alteration of the *primitive Order* observed in the Church, which did gradually resolve at last into a *total innovation* of the *Churches Order*, by a *papal supremacy*, which it hath exchanged for a *Cæsario-papatus* in *Scotland*, lest the Church should not be still monstrous with two heads, one under another ; And it is indeed a hard Question ; Why Order in the Church, ( which we say, cannot be without *prius & posterius, inferius & superius* ) doth not equally require a *Pope*, or King under CHRIST over Bishops, as a Bishop under CHRIST over Presbytry ; Or why a parity amongst Bishops should not be thought as inconsistent with Order as a parity among all Pastors. But neither doth the *Presbyterian Government* want its Order of *superius & inferius*, for amongst them single persons are subject to *Church Judicatories*, and a lesser Church Judicatory still to a greater, &c. In which Order feeding there is not only that *ab inferiore ad superius*, but a *minore ad majus*, it is most agreeable to the Church, as it is the Body of CHRIST, immediately depending upon CHRIST its Head. And I confess ingenuously, when they have argued that feeding of Souls by dispensing the Word and Sacraments is the sublimest piece of a Church Mans employment ; that all power of Church Officers is only Ministerial under CHRIST the Head and Lord of his Church ; that though he be the *political* as well as *Mystical Head of the Church*, who as its King and Lawgiver, might be expected would not leave it without Directions how it should be governed, yet there is no institution of a *Diocesan Episcopacy*, that was ever pretended to be so clear as the Directions given concerning the Office of a Deacon, the lowest Office in the Church ; But the checks given by him to the first appearances of an inclination to *pre-eminency* among his *Apostles*, are clearly recorded in Scripture ; and finally, that the lodging of all *Ecclesiastick*  
power



power of Ordination or Jurisdiction, in the single person of a Bishop doth not sute with the immediate Dependance of the Church, the Body of CHRIST upon CHRIST the Head of it; When they have Argued thus, I say, and urged each of these Arguments at length, I have been extremly puzzled to vindicat the *Episcopal Order*, and the superiority of one Pastor above another; All I could say, was, That Bishops are as necessary to oversee Pastors, as Pastors to oversee People, and they easily stopped my mouth, not only by retorting the equal necessity of a *pope*, to oversee Bishops; But by shewing also that all Pastors were subject to the censure of *Church Judicatories*, which could not easily be guilty of connivance and partiality, towards the ignorant and scandalous as Bishops; and which by their solemnity & impartiality, have as great and venerable an Authority as a Bishop by virtue of his large Benefice, Lordly Titles, and pompous Train can have: Yea, I have been almost perswaded to be a *presbyterian*, when they have reasoned, that seing we confess, the highest *Ecclesiastick power* on Earth to be in an *Oecumenick Council*, and yet allow not of any further power in him that preceeds, than like that of a *presbyterian Moderator* in a *Presbytry-synod*, or *National Assembly*, and not like that of a Bishop in a *Diocesan Synod*, for fear of a *pope*; Why do we not also acknowledge Ministers to be subject to inferiour Judicatories of the like frame, and an inferiour and lesser Judicatory, to a superior and greater still forward, till we arrive at an *Oecumenick Council*, as the highest Judicatorie of all immediately and solly subject to CHRIST as the Body to the Head, without any *Diocesan* Bishop over these inferiour more than a *pope* over his *supreme Judicatorie*, as being the most equal and Homogenous, and therefore also the most suitable and excellent Order of the Church, making the Government of particular Churches, and of the *Universal Visible Church*, to agree together with an excellent Harmony, and most orderly Decency. I am Naturally of such an ingenuous Temper, that I had not the confidence to reply, that the Members of the *Oecumenick Councils* were *Diocesan Bishops*, because I not only knew that *presbyters* have been admited Members, and voted as well as Bishops, and that *presbyterian* as well as *Episcopal Churches* must be allowed their *Delegates* in case of an *Oecumenick Council*, without any other power than that of the Representatives of the Church that sends them, Representing their Brethren, and not having power over them lodged in their single person: But I perceive the strength of the Argument did not at all consist in the Quality of the Members of a *General Council*; whether Bishops or Presbyters, but its Frame and the Method of its Acting, and

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Exerting its Authority: And finally, I have been greatly ashamed, and quite confounded, when they asked, Whether an *Erastian head*, an *Episcopal Body*, and a *Presbyterian Tail*, would orderly agree together, to make an intire *Church Government*; and laughing at the monstrous Fabric of our Government, by such a mixture, told me that we Attributed an Ecclesiastical Supremacy to the King, to unite him to our interest, that we may abuse and prostitute his Power and Authority, in prosecuting and promoting it; And that we make use of *Parochial Sossins* from the Example of *Presbytry*, though *Lay Elders* be contrary to our principles, for amaling the Consciences of Ignorant People into the more willing subjection to us, as nothing differing from *Presbyterian Ministers*: But that *Episcopal preeminencies* and *benefices* are the chief Design of all, to satisfy the Ambition & Avarice of the leading men amongst us &c to be a shelter and incouragement, to the ignorance, idleness, and profanity of the rest of us. Thus ye see how they have treated me in this point, who though I come short in point of obstinate Confidence, yet I understand the Controversie betwixt *Presbyterians* and us, better then many of my Brethren, and have had greater advantages to do then the most part of them; And I nothing doubt but ye will meet with the like usage from your Adversaries, to your publick shame, and affronting our cause, if ye prevent it not.

The next thing is, that [*Episcopacy is the best Adapted for preservation of peace*] *Presbyterians* will acknowledge; that it is a very calm, gentle, and peaceable Government to scandalous Sinners, and in this has the Advantage of being more acceptable then the *Presbyterian* to such, not knowing that favour to their Sins is cruelty to their Souls; And yet I have heard some of our own Perswasion say, that the *Presbyterian Government* amidst all its severity, was more favourable then the *Episcopal*, because, though they were greedy of Folks repentance, yet they were not greedy of their Purfes. But ye may assure your self, it will be accounted the height of impudence, so much as to have men's med peace as the native effect of *Episcopacy*, and all the World will be appealed unto, whether our *Bishops* have not been the chief troublers of *Israel*, and whether the connivence (to say no more) of the *Episcopal Government* at Popery and profanity, ( which are the only peaceable Effects it can pretend to in *Scotland*, ) doth Counterballance its Rigour, and cruelty against *Non-conformity*, ( even when accompanied with Exemplary Sobriety, Piety and Loyalty, ) or whether it doth not exceedingly aggredge the same, and render it the more odious to all that compare its favour to these with its severity to this. And ingenuously, what-

whatever be in their imputing to *Episcopacy*, Tyranny over Mens Consciences as its native effect, yet it is so sadly evident that it hath Extremely degenerated thereunto in this Church and Kingdom, that we cannot doubt, but it will meet with an easie belie from most part of the Nation, in spite of all your confident Assertions to the contrary, they will grant that *Presbytery* hath been so *unfortunate*, as not only to be rendered unacceptable to our Kings, being at a distance in another Nation, by the cunning Misinformations of Self-seeking *Courtiers*, the Calumnious Instigations of *English Bishops*, ignorant of the Genius of *Scotland*, and the Pragmatic Influence of *Jesuits*, whose greatest Eye sore it is. But also to be made a Mask to the Politick Design of *Incendiaries* and *Ujurers*, (tho they retained it no longer then their Designs behoved to be kept close,) and by this means to be misconstrued, as the chief cause of War and Blood shed by these, who understand not the Intrigues of Affairs, but after they grant you all this, nothing, they will confidently accuse *Episcopacy*, that it hath been both so cruel and shameless, as even of choise, to turn, the most Serene peace & solid Happiness that ever this Nation was blessed with, at the Restauration of K. *Charles* the 2<sup>d</sup>. into a perpetual Tragedy of Persecution, Oppression, and of *Arbitrary Government*, manifestly of design to Introduce and Establish it self without the Conjunction of any other Malign influence imaginable: Though perhaps a *popish* party stroke in to an After Game, finding *Episcopals* as forward as they could wish, to ruine *presbyterians* (though to the weakning of the *Protestant Interest*) hoping that if they should not be ruined by us, yet they should be so weakened and Exasperated, as to be easily gulled by their pretended Moderation to a concurrence with them, for the razing down the securities of the Reformed Religion by the *Penal Laws* against *Papists*, (which by a total desuetude we had rendered contemptible,) to shelter themselves from our Rigorous and severe Laws against them. that so at Length *popery* might swallow us up both. And no Thanks to us that the *papists* were disappointed of their Design, by the *presbyterians* greater zeal against *popery*, then Resentment at our greater Severity to them then to *Papists*, which when I consider, I have a strong Apprehension that the Lord is about to reward their Faithfulness to their Principles as Protestants, with a Legal establishment of their Government, in its integrity under a Presbyterian King, according to their wishes. So that you see what ever else you ascribe to *Episcopacy*, your was folly to mainrain peace.

In the last place you say [ That Episcopal Government is found by Experience to be the best Adapted, for preservation of Unity ] And why

why not, say they, the Papal Government for Unity amongst Bishops as well as the Episcopal for Unity amongst Presbyters? But they will speak more home, and accuse us of schism in receding from the unrepealed Acts and Constitutions of the Church: And so Father the Schism on Episcopacy, intruded into the Church by meer Civil Laws and violently pressed upon all by the Sword of Persecution. Without any due pains or proper methods used for preparing the Nation, for its reception. And albeit that the present divisions amongst Presbyterians are much talked of, yet judicious Persons will impute them rather to the want of Presbyterian Government in the full and free exercise of its Authority, then to the weakness of the Government in it self: and I am informed that lately both Parties are endeavouring an Union, and resolve to Act Unity against us: and when the Moderation of the One, and the Zeal of the Other party are Joined and Tempered together. They will make a more Formidable Figure both as to Counsel & Action, then if they had never been divided. And though likewise the former Divisions betwixt the Remonstrators and Publick Resolvers are not forgotten, and serve to heighten the prejudices of such as are not acquainted with the mysterious Intrigues of these times. Yet they who knew how cunningly they were fomented under Board, by the Kings Courtiers on the one hand, and that wylie Fox Cromwel on the other: will not Impute them to the Presbyterian Government as its native Effects, especially seeing that the chief Motive that induced the Usurper to rob them of the privileges of free General Assemblies was the fear of their Union, which he knew could easily be affected by it last and surest remedie, that amidst their Intestine Divisions, he might the more easily settle himself in his Usurped power, without any opposition from them, of whole Conscientious Loyalty he had greatest Jealousies and fear. But alace! what can we say for our vindication if they charge us, that while we boast of Unity, we have not kept the Unity of the Faith. For they know well enough that as some of our Clergy are Socinian, ( the vilest of Hereticks, ) so also that the Generality of the Learned amongst us are gross Arminians, who were condemned as Hereticks by that Famous Synod of Dort: to which our Famous K: James the 6th. Sent Representatives from the Churches in Britain. And thus they represent our pretended Unity under Bishops, so unconcerned with the Purity of Doctrine to be rather Odious and Detestable, then Harmonious and Commendable; whereas the Commendation of this Church for its Unitie under Presbyterian Government is so great in all the Reformed Churches: And was so frequently upbraided to the English Bishops by K. James the 6th. from the displeasure he had at the Scots Heresies

Heresies and Schisms abounding in *England*, that *Presbyterians* will, scarce think themselves obliged to an Apology for any Divisions that were or Schism that is among them.

Sir, I have stayed the longer upon your first Reason, because it is the Basis of all the Controversie; And as it is unbecoming, the Wildom and Piety of the Ensuing Convention, to be Acted merely by *Politick Considerations* in so weighty a Concern: Wherein the *Glory of God*, and the *Souls and Consciences of all in the Nation* are so deeply Interested. So that if your Adversaries by a fair and full answer not only enervate this Reason, but turn the edge of it upon us, they may so prepossess the Consciences of the Members in their Favours that all your other Reasons will avail little though they were better then they are. But that I may proceed;

Your Second Reason is, [*That the most part of the Gentry and Burgeses have taken the Test, and therefore can never without Perjury, Vote for the Introduction of Presbyters, or choose such Commissioners as are suspected to Favour that way*] Sir, the *Presbyterians* will not fail to tell you that you lose your 1st. Reason by this 2d. For if the Test be *Obligatory* to every point, then also to maintain the Kings Prerogative, whereof this is a chief one, by Law, that he may alter or dispose of the External Government of the Church according to his pleasure, which whosoever is sworn to, he can no longer for shame, plead for *Episcopacy* upon such grounds as you propose in your former Reason, unless he renounce that Oath in part as not Obligatory, and as to some parts of it *presbyterians* themselves, will approve it so far as concerns the maintaining of the *Protestant Religion*, and the Renunciation of *popery*. And I have heard them Applaud the Faithfulness of the last *parliament*, in keeping this part of their Oath: For they know that the chief thing designed in the first overture of it, was only the Security of the *protestant Religion*, though there were such Additions made to what was intended for that end, as might weaken, break, or ensnare that party in *parliament* that first motioned it, being lookt upon as too Jealous of, and Zealous against *popery*, and as for these Additions no wonder they except against the Obligation of them, seeing that even we our selves did express so much of our Aversion thereat at first; so long as we expected by our General clamours against it, to procure an Exemption from the Imposition thereof; And as our fear of Losing our Benefices rather then our Inclinations determined us, and the fair Colour of the Explication given by the Council, (though alas! what signifies the Explication of an Oath, that must needs be taken in the Genuine Sense of the Words,) encouraged us to swear it, so doubtless the rest of the Nation swore it with great Reluctancy, rather from a regard

of their Places and Interests, then GOD and their Consciences, ( which generally at first accused them of Perjury that took it, as being obviously contradictory in it self, and in many things contradictory to their Light; ) until the Generality and frequency of the Guilt abated, the sense of it, and therefore cannot be expected, will be very precise in adhering to it, to whatever confidence many have arrived, for justifying it in their Discourse (to which length as is every part of it, few have come;) yet the remorse of their Consciences for it, is not totally extinguished, at least is not turned to a sense of its Obligation in every point; and to be plain with you, there must be an Alteration less or more: This is both designed and desired by all Ranks of Persons: They all agree in this, tho they disagree in the measure of it; And next to the settling the *Prince of Orange* in the Throne, it is one of the chief designs of the *Convention*, so that your Arguing from the Obligation of the *Test* is altogether vain, especially seeing it is so unhappily framed, that if it bind up from any, it equally binds up from all endeavours of any Alteration whatsoever any manner of way, of the established Government either in Church or State; and when upon this account, its Obligations will and must be trampled upon. It cannot but be very unacceptable, to plead no Alteration for fear of Perjury; but truly I understand not how every Alteration can be accounted Perjury, in reference to any Article in the *Test*, for that part of it which strikes most directly against any Alteration, is merely Assertory not promissory, neither does it peremptorily assert that there should be no Alteration, but only that there is no Obligation by the Covenants to endeavour it, and it can hardly be expected that those who have taken the *Test*, will be determined by any sense of the Obligation of the Covenants to endeavour an Alteration, nor is it necessary, seeing Scripture, Reason and Policy, do all of them together loudly and evidently call for it in this present Juncture, which is a three-fold Cord, more strongly binding then the *Test* can pretend to be, at least in this point; So that you see how little weight is in your Argument from the *Test*, and what it amounts to when duly pondered. I nothing doubt but the Gentry and Burgeses will laugh at you, for proposing that for determining their Consciences, which all know was mainly imposed for debauching their Consciences.

Your 3. Reason contains several things in it, huddled together as if ye would compensate weight by number, wherein ye seem rather to design the insinuating the *Presbyterians* to declare their Sentiments unreasonably, about some difficult points, then to prove any thing against them; But they are neither stated in such difficult Circumstances, nor so void of prudence,



prudence, but that they can answer you both confidently and cautiously to their great Advantage, by removing the prejudices of many against *Presbytry*, because of the inconveniencies they apprehend must attend it.

The first thing ye alledge is, That [ *if presbytry be voted, then returns upon you the Solemn League and Covenant, as is not only evident from their Gen. Ass: &c.* ] Sir, ye so manifestly betray your ignorance of the difference betwixt the *National Covenant and Solemn League*, that those who are better acquainted with the Principles and History of *presbytry in Scotland*, will account you an Ignorant Scribler against things ye understand not; As for the *solemn League*, I know not what ye understand by [ *the Natural Exigence of it.* ] but sure *presbyterian Government* might have continued in Scotland a thousand years without any such League, if England had not given an Occasion of it: And it is so far from being the only conceivable [ *foundation for its parity* ] that it is but a late thing, which was not so much as thought upon either at the first planting of *Presbyterian Government in Scotland*, after the Reformation, nor for several years after it was re-established again, so that it is the *National Covenant* which ye would be at; And as for the other, I shall shew you what *presbyterians* can say, for preventing your Fears, when I come to your last Reason, to which it properly belongs. Its true, the *National Covenant* is almost as Ancient, as the *Legal Establishment of the Reformed Religion*, and *presbyterian Government in Scotland*, it being about an hundred years since it was taken by all in the Nation, at the appointment of King *James the sixth*: And as it was then conceived, cannot be excepted against in any point by any sound Protestant; being an Obligation against *poperie*, and all its corruptions in Doctrine, Worship and Government, so that if ye will have it even then to be the *foundation of parity*, ye do exceedingly wrong our Cause, and do in effect justify the Explication annexed to it, thereafter shewing *Episcopacie* be included in the *popish Hierarchie* abjured therein, which *presbyterians* will tell you was not only approved in *parliament 39*, but also solemnly Ratified by King *Charles the First*, his own hand writing, when he was personally present in *Parliament 41*. And they will ask you, how it comes to pass, that ye who was just now so fearful of perjury, in reference to the *Test*? Should he be so fearful for the remembrance of a poor Obligation upon the *Church and Nation*; For as to any other Return of it upon us, *presbyterians* will not impose it again without the appointment of King and parliament, and the general consent of all Ranks in the Nation, for they have seen the disadvantage we have been at, in pressing Conformitie to the *Episcopal Government*, without pains taken to prepare the Nation for it; And have learned to be cautious by our precipi-

pitancy. Nor do [*the present proceedings of the presbyterian preachers*] give any ground to expect the renewing of the Covenant, albeit they aggradge the guilt of Compliance with *prelacy* from the obligation of the Covenant, as to these who own it as condemning nothing, but what they are Antecedently obliged unto by the Word of GOD. And this Antecedent obligation to every thing in the *National Covenant*, is so common & confirmed an Opinion among all *Presbyterians*, that they will defy you to shew any one of these [*manifest impieties in that Oath*] which ye speak of in General. And ingenuously, except its Abjuration of *prelacy*, I know nothing in it, that any *Episcopal* will condemn who hath read it; and as for that point, if ever it be ordered to be renewed, by appointment of King and Parliament, I know none of the most considerable in the Nation, who (seeing such understand both their Duty and Interest) will either fear Perjury by taking of it, or choose Misery by refusing it. And I hope the refusing it shall never be judged a sufficient crime, to provoke the Government to reduce any ranks of Persons, far less the most considerable in the Nation to misery. And I find the *Presbyterians* to be Generally of such a cautious Temper, and moderate Disposition, especially the leading Men amongst them, that I nothing doubt, but they will carefully avoid all such practices, as they find do give any ground of prejudices against their Predecessors, whom they do not deny to have been overswayed in somethings to an Extreme by the Bias, and Torrent of the time they lived in.

Next you alledge, [*That if the Covenant return, no man can have publick place, either in Church or State, but such as shall do Penance for taking the Test*] what *Law Reasoning* is this that if *Presbytery* be Voted the *Covenant* returns, as if there could not be a Voting for *Presbytery* without voting also for renewing the *Covenant*, and if the *Covenant* return; no man can have publick Place without Penance for the *Test*: As if there were no other way of removing the Scandal of a *General and National Guilt*, but by particular Satisfaction from every Person guilty. I have heard some of the Sober and Learned amongst them say, that the Generality of guilt renders a particular Satisfaction, neither Seasonable nor Practicable-Necessary nor Suitable, and that Cordial Joining in publick Humiliation, and a Zealous owning of their Interest will remove the Scandal and Satisfie them.

You say further that, [*A great part of the Laity of the Nation must be reduced to sad Straits, both in reference to Conscience and Interest*] I know none need to fear that, but these who undergoes *Episcopal Government*, have been habituated to such an Licentious prophanity, that the restraining them



them within the just bounds of sobriety, may prove hard and uneasy to their *Lax Consciences*, which is no great Inconveniencie, or these who have had all their lively hood by their dependance on the Episcopal Government and have been undeservedly advanced to places of Benefit, Trust or Service, whose particular Disadvantage by their losing their place, is the publick Advantage of the Nation.

And finally you infer, [*That the Regular Clergy will be turned out, which will reduce the Church to such amazing hardships, that the Gospel shall not be preached in three parts of the Kingdom, there not being an hundred qualified Presbyterians in Scotland.*] Sir, It should be your desire and mine both, that all the Insufficient, Scandalous and Erroneous among the Clergy were turned out; and their places were Vacant, till able Men were provided; rather then filled with such men ( who do far more obstruct then promote the Edification of the Church ) without the hope, of being better supplied. And alace! I'm affraid that two parts of three of our Clergy, may be too justly reduced to one or other of these three Classes; So that by my best Information, the *Presbyterian partie*, if ye join their Ministers, Preachers, and young Men, Ready for the Ministry together: With such also, as have diverted themselves to other Employments, because of the Discouragements of the Times, and are willing and ready to serve the Church, if there were incouragement for the Ministry, they have moe qualified men amongst them; then there are Sufficient, Sober, and Orthodox Men amongst our Clergy, so that they could within less then a year, furnish the one half of the Congregations in *Scotland*. And when from about an hundred and some more, they have in a year and an halfe space accreased and amounted to so many, without the help of Universities; We may easily calculate, how short a time will increase them to the compleat Number. But I am hopeful that they will admit any Learned, Sober and Orthodox person amongst us upon very easie terms; our acknowledging *Presbyterian Government* to be lawful, our guilt of Separation from them and of taking the Test; And I know none of us that will choose rather to be turned out, by refusing then kept in their places upon accepting such favourable Terms.

Your 4. Reason is, [*That if Presbytery, be not thus established in its integrity, but all that Alteration turn to a Non-Episcopacy, and the present Presbyters continue in their Offices; Then our deplorable Schisms and Divisions shall continue without a Remedy, or else the Magistrate will take upon him the Government of the Church, and we shall have downright Erastianism.*] Sir, The foolishness of this Argument is so obvious, that I think I may spare my pains in

in shewing it unto you. One would think it the voice of a *Presbyterian*; proving the necessity of an entire Alteration, rather than of an *Episcopal* pleading no Alteration at all; *Presbyterians* will grant all you say, and turn the mouth of this Cannon directly against your self, by Arguing thus, If *Episcopacy* be contained, then our deplorable Schisms and Divisions shall be Remediless, also we shall still have downright *Erastianism*, and how can ye evade the force of this Argument of your own I see not; For it is evident by experience, that we may despair of ever gaining the *Presbyterians* to a compliance with us; seeing that so many years, violent Persecution hath rather alienated them from us, beyond all hope of either Reconciliation or Accommodation. And it is as undeniable, that there is not so gross *Erastianism* in the World, as is established by Law, and complicated, and twisted with the *Episcopal Government in Scotland*. Yea they will further baffle you, by reasoning with you thus, If *Presbytery* were established in its Integrity, our deplorable Division would easily be healed, and we should be altogether quite of *Erastianism*, and ye cannot shelter your self from this more then the former Argument; For it is more then probable, that few of us would refuse to comply with *Presbytery* when once established by Law; and it is too much to be suspected, that the present bitterness of many of our Clergy against *Presbyterians* proceeds, from their Consciousness to themselves of their insufficiency, profanity, or Heterodoxy, (and perhaps also Cruelty,) which makes them despair of Admission into the Brotherhood of the *Presbyterians*. And it is certain that there are no Principles contrary to *Erastianism* more then the *Presbyterian*; For they allow not any Ecclesiastick Power of Jurisdiction to be lodged in any single Person though Ecclesiastick, much less Civil; and yet they do neither exempt Church Men from their Subjection to the Magistrates power as his Subjects, nor the Church from the Magistrates care as her Nursing Father. Their Principles in this point are very Rational, for though they deny Ministers to be as directly subjected to the Magistrate in their Ecclesiastick Capacity as Ministers, as in their Civil Capacity of Subjects; Yet they ascribe as much power to him in reference to the Church, as any Wise and Pious Magistrate will require; they grant the Magistrate hath a restitutive power, for repairing a broken Church, though not a Constitutive of constituting the frame of its Government, and building such a Fabrick of a Church as he pleases; A power Convocative for calling Church Assemblies to meet, for the Government of the Church, though not a power Coercive of hindering them to meet at all; A power Defensive  
of

of defending the true Religion, and the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Church, though not a power Determinative, to determine concerning these things at his pleasure; a power Concursive, to concur by his Civil Sanction with the Determinations of the Church, and confirm their Obligation on his Subjects, though not a power Coactive, to force the Church to follow his Dictates in things Ecclesiastick; And in a word, they grant him all Power even in Ecclesiasticks that is Cumulative to the Churches Advantage; though they deny him to have any Privative power to the Churches prejudice. Whereas *Episcopacy in Scotland* has no other Basis but gross *Erastianism*, so that you see how much you may be soild with your own Weapons; And ye may expect a challenge to express the ingenuity of your fears, (of continued Divisions and Schisms, and of downright *Erastianism*,) by quitting the *Episcopal* way wherein ye Act the *Schismatick*, in receding from the standing Laws of the Church, in compliance with New Civil Laws, and approve *Erastianism* in adhering to the Test.

Your fifth Reason is, [ *That the Establishment of Presbytery will have almost pernicious Influence on the Protestants Religion in this Island, if ever Popery set up its head, &c.* ] Sir, I confess it is more proper for you to shew the Inconveniencie that will follow, if *Presbytry* be established, then it not. Yet, I suspect you be as unhappy in this as in the former Argument. The greatest Advantage that I find in your Reasons, is that you touch upon some things concerning which, it is unreasonable and dangerous for *Presbyterians* fully to express themselves. But alas! you do here but touch on that which is the very Sore and Weakest Side of *Episcopacy*; for you cannot be ignorant of the General Complaints of, and prejudices at our Government. As not only a shelter and covert to *Papists*: But as Instrumental in advancing *Popish* designs, partly by the Ignorance, Profanicy, and *Arminianism* abounding under it. Disposing and preparing the Nation for *Popery*, and partly by its Severity and cruelty towards dissenting *Protestants*, to the manifest weakning of the *Protestant Interest*. And even Envy it self cannot but acknowledge the *Presbyterian Government*, hath been abundantly both severe and successful against *Popery*; and nothing blunted and slackned in its Zeal and Watchfulness against *Papists* amidst all its severities against *Episcopals*, whereas the Penal Laws against *Papists* were brought to such a Deluetude by us, that the most threatening dangers from *Popery* could not awaken us to the Execution of them, least we should have diverted from persecuting *Presbyterians*, by a rigorous Execution of the Laws made in our Favours against them, which did so intirely take up the Government, that not only

only both Profanity and Popery have been connived at, but encouraged in so far as they were assisting to us, in opposing and oppressing *Presbyterians*; so that it will never be believed that *Presbyterian Government* hath any pernicious Influence upon the *Protestant Religion*, but rather that it hath a powerful Influence for securing it against *Popery* far more vigorous and Zealous, yea, and effectual and successful then ever the *Episcopal* had, at least in *Scotland*; And it is evident that the *Presbyterian Interest*, is every way at present more directly opposite to the *Popish Interest* then the *Episcopal* is, which I am afraid shall yet further appear by the carriage and conduct of our party in the *Convention*, & that so manifestly as to heighten the Nations prejudices against *Episcopacy* more then ever, and make all sober *Protestants* conclude, that we must of necessity have either *Presbytry* or *Popery*, and truly I cannot otherwise Judge of it, then as an Intimation, prefiging the ruine of our Interest, if the Bishops and the Nobility, Gentry and Burgeses of our Perswasion shall join Issue with a *Popish* party against the *Prince of Orange* his Interest: which is so inseparably Interwoven with the Reformed Interest in *Europe*, and especially in *Britain*: That by adhering to the Interest of King *James the 7th.* in opposition to his, they will unavoidably either give provocation to the *Prince of Orange* to abrogate *Episcopacy* in *Scotland*; in order to the advancing and establishing the *Reformed Religion*, or else give occasion or advantage to King *James the 7th.* to Redintegrate his *Popish* designs with more violence and success than ever before, to the ruine of all protest *Protestants*, and especially of us *Episcopals*, because we have the *Laws* upon our side, without any more regard to their Zeal and Activity for him in his Extremities, then the King of *France* had for the *Protestants*, who kept the Crown on his Head; or Queen *Mary of England*, to the Counties of *Suffolk* and *Northfolk* who advanced her to the Crown; or (to come home) then King *Charles the 2d.* had to the *Presbyterians*, who in his greatest extremities brought him home to *Scotland*, and spent their blood for him at *Worcester*. And its certain that our refusing to follow *Englands* Example of Gratitude to the *Prince of Orange*, will necessitate this Church and Kingdom; to stand upon a bottom more different from: Yea, opposite unto that of *England*, than if *presbytry* were Established, and will oblige us to secure our selves from *Popery*, by methods as different from the wise Conduct of the *English*: As the binding of *Samson* with Cords, was from the shaving the Locks of his Head: or to come nearer, as there was betwixt *Englands* and *Scotlands* carriage towards the Duke of *York*; and at the best will be very hard for *Scotland*, so that your fears [least the establishment of *presbytry* necessitate the Churches of *Scotland* and

and England to stand upon different Customs which will be hard for Scotland.] are but feigned and groundleis, neither favouring of a politick, Wit, nor an Ingenuous Spirit: For Church Government is Extrinsicke to the Foundation of the Reformed Religion, and Protestants were at a los, if their Arguments against Popery were principally founded upon this Topick, or could not be deduced from any other: Presbyterians will tell you, That culy the *Scriptures are the Foundation of the Reformed Religion*, and the common bottom on which all the Reformed Churches are founded. But also, that the greater part of the *Episcopal Champions and Clergy* acknowledge *Episcopacy* to have no other Warrant, than an *Ecclesiastick constitution*, which is a foundation common to all the *popish corruptions*; And whereas ye repeat, That [*presbytrie will divide Scotland from England, which will open a door to the re-entrty of popery*;] Are they not united in one common Protestant interest? Except in so far as the *Clergy of England* are generally *Arminians*, excepting some few Learned Men, which I confesse will oblige them to justify themselves by different Arguments, not only from *Scottish presbyterians*, but all the other Reformed Churches, which will be harder for England than Scotland. But that *presbytrie* will open a door to the re-entrty of *popery*, will never be believed, seing *presbyterians* at first ejected it out of Scotland; And all their time secured the Nation from it (more than ever since) without the Assistance of England, which if ever *Scottish presbyterians* shall need, they may expect it much more from the P: of Orange, when he shall be their King, as well as Englands. Then even when Queen Elizabeth found her self obliged to give it, by the Tye of the common interest of Religion, without any Relation to them as her Subjects. And as for your Tautologicke repetition again (that *presbytry cannot but alienate the Affections of the Church of England from us, which considering our weakness, will expose us as a prey to the common Enemy*) it is altogether vain and foolish; For the Church of England can never be more alienated in their Affections to *presbyterians*, than at this present towards our Bishops, and as their joyning issue with *papists* against the prince of Orange, hath exceedingly discommended them to it; so the *presbyterians* joyning issue with him, by their Zeal against *Popery*, will as much commend them to it. And how ever, ye may be assured, that the interest of England will oblige them to assist Scotland in case of Danger from *popery*, more effectually than their difference from Scotland in point of Church Government, can alienate them, for ye know the Maxim;

*Tunc tua res agitur paries cum proximus ardet.*

But many are of Opinion that if *Episcopacy* be continued, it will perpetuate such irreconcilable, intestine Divisions and Animosities in Scotland,



land, as will weaken and expose us a prey to Popery, more then any Assistance from England can strengthen and secure us from it, whereas the establishment of Presbytery, would bring us to such an intire and firm Union, that Scotland could secure it self from all danger of Popery, without any Assistance from England; Yea, and put us in Capacity to Assist England in case of danger from Popish Attempts; which that Church and Kingdom, by the policy of some other laud may too readily be brought into, which I wish heartily GOD may prevent: So that ye see how far ye are out in this Reason.

Your 6th Reason is so weak, that you need no more then sure Information from England, and impartial consideration how the interest of the Prince and Princess of Orange is stated to abate your Confidence in it. You say, [That to be for presbytery, in this juncture will exceedingly disoblige the Princess of Orange, whose principles are known to all Europe in this matter] Sir, ye are greatly mistaken, for I have seen a Letter from a person who knows her sentiments; shewing that she is not only willing to give Dissenters all satisfaction, and if Episcopacy be continued in England to her mind, that the Prince be gratified by the Revival of Presbytrie in Scotland; But also, that she hath a particular Resentment of the severities and cruelties exercised towards the Presbyterians in Scotland, and has frequently declared, that being Presbytrie commenced with the Reformation of this Kingdom, has been solemnly sworn to, and established by the National Assemblies of the Church, and the Sanction of the Civil Laws; She judgeth it neither Equitable nor convenient that any other Government should be pressed on that People. And we need not doubt, but as the Calamities of Presbyterians hath begot a compassion in her heart towards them; So the Bishops Loyal Address to the King, hath much cooled her Affection for us, and I wish their after Carriage do not heighten her prejudice against them. And how ever, she is certainly a Princess of that Wisdom, and Zeal for the Reformed Religion, that nothing will displease or disoblige her, that is most necessary and convenient for the Advancement and Establishment of the Protestant Interest in Scotland; for which Presbyterians can too easily shew the Re-establishment of Presbytrie to be the most proper and effectual Method, which one of them hath done already, by some Reasons which I have seen, why in this juncture Episcopacy should be atrogated and Presbytrie Re-established. Moreover, she is a Princess of such moderate Inclinations; that nothing can more disoblige her, then the persecution of Protestants by Protestants; And she is not so ignorant of our Affairs, but that she knows that unless the Episcopal Clergy can alwayes patiently indure a general contempt; or be secured

cured from ever having any influence on the Government. *Episcopacy* and persecution in *Scotland* are inseparable. And for the Prince, I know not what Ground ye have for your confidence; to say, That [ *to be for Presbytery will disoblidge him also, who has no inclination for the Reiteration of the Government of the Church as he has now abundantly declared* ] You seem to be equally destitute of Policy, and good Intelligence: For as it is known to all the World that he is *Presbyterian*; so his Declaration for *Scotland*, hath insinuated his inclinatio<sup>n</sup>s to favour *Presbyterians*, as clearly as was convenient for the Time. And though his Wildom and Moderation be such in expressing himself, that nothing can be certainly concluded from any thing that hath dropt from him, yet it is evident that he will Judge the *Presbyterian Party* more worthy of his confidence & more suitable objects of his favour, than the *Episcopal*, for he will doubtless expect, that these will be more firm and faithful to his Interest, whose respect to him is established by their conscientious Zeal for the Reformed Religion against *papery*, and who shall be chiefly obliged to him; for restoring their former Priviledges; then these who are Acted Generally by their Interests, and have been so deeply engaged in Interests opposite to his, and who must be in some measure disoblidged of necessity, by Moderating and Balancing their Exorbitant power, and rescinding the cruel Laws made in their Favours. And I am afraid that the *Presbyterians* will be more Active and Zealous in advancing him to the Crown of *Scotland*, then these of our perswasion, and thereby oblige him to favour them as his best and surest Friends; & albeit that the *prerogatives* which we annex to the Crown be a great Tentation to one that designs *Arbitrary Government*, yet it avails little, with a Prince of such a Wife and Moderate Temper, who has seen his Predecessors either endangered or ruined, by their Attempting and Exercising it, and who knows that Kings Sovereignty, and a Peoples Liberties, are most firmly secured, when most equally established as (notwithstanding of the prejudices of some against *Presbytry*, as inconsistent with Monarchy) I confess they have been in the peaceable times of the *Presbyterian Government*, when King *James the 6th* and his Son King *Charles 1st.* were personally present in their Parliaments, & had greater advantages for understanding their own, and their Peoples Interest, then can be had at a distance, and only by Information from subtle self-seeking Courtiers. So that you see how far ye are deceived in your expectations from the Prince and Princess of *Orange*, who will doubtless Endeavour to Redress the Grievances in Church and State, which ye cannot conceive possible without some Alteration, and that greater then ye seem to apprehend.

Your seventh Reason is, a Reference of several things to the consideration of all thinking men, as sufficient to determine them to an aversion at *Presbytry*, wherein ye go so far beyond the bounds of Sobriety, and give so great suspicion of Calumny, that *Presbyterians* will represent you as a *Machiavilan*, throwing much dirt upon them only of design that some of it may stick, [ *let all thinking men reflect (say ye) upon the natural temper of presbytry and view it in its Tyrannical Pragmatick meddling and Domineering effects, which many good men yet living of all qualities have severely felt* ] Sir, I know not well what ye mean by [ *natural temper more then by your natural Reception and Exigence* ] but *Presbyterians* will refer their principles to the consideration of all Impartial Men, whither they be no more agreeable to Divine Institution in the Scripture, then *Episcopacy* though they be not so agreeable to the Natural Tempers of Men; which they grant to be no better in *presbyterians*, then in others, yea to have been so very *Episcopal* in some of them, as to carry them to practices, Dissonant to their principles, and upon that account more hateful then worse practices of Bishops, because suitable, or at least unsuitable to their principles; for that which would be accounted Gravity, Dexterity, Actively and Zeal, in a Bishop, is accounted Tyrannical, Pragmatical meddling and Domineering in a *Presbyter*. But these are not the proper and native Effects of *Presbytry*, rather imitations of *Episcopacie* (proceeding from Mens natural Infirmitives, and the peculiar circumstances, and torrent of the times they have lived in) contrary to their principles. So that in effect all that is quarrell'd in *Presbyterians* is the *Episcopal* practice in some of them under a *Presbyterian* profession, which cannot be justly charged on the whole party; and for less on their principles, which have a quite contrary tendency; And ingenuously by *Presbytry* will be judged by few to have such a tendency to Tyranny over the Church, & Pragmatick meddling with the State, as *Episcopacy* (as its constitute in *Scotland*) hath; And they will desire all Judicious men to consider whether Idleness, Ambition and Avarice in the Clergy; Ignorance, Worldly mindedness and Profanity among People: Be not the effects of *Episcopacy*; and indeed so manifestly have these abounded under *Episcopal Government*, that the most part will decide the question in their Favours against us. But I cannot wonder enough, what could move you to think [ *much more deliberately to write of the Hypocrisie, immortality and Antichristian genius of the Presbyterian party* ] seeing these things may not only be retorted with great Advantage, but cannot justly and ingenuously be charged on the Generality of *presbyterians*; you may assure your self this will tempt them to draw up a *Black Lybel* against the Bishops and Generality of our Clergy, as alas they have



too large grounds for, recent in the remembrance of the Nation; and they will think it enough to tell you calmly and soberly, that if persons unsuitableness to their profession be Hypocrisie, if the grossest of scandals and open profanity be immoralitie: And finally, if violent persecution be the Effect and Evidence of an *Antichristian genius*; All these things are more applicable to *Episcopals* then *presbyterians*; So that all these Reflections directed against them, will rebound on our selves; And I am afraid they will stick faster to us then to them; because they not only agree to the general Sentiments of all Ranks of people, but their Observations and Experience of them is late and recent; Whereas the most part of old Malignants, who were formerly carried away with prejudices against *presbytry* under the pretences of Loyalty, have turned *Fanaticks* since, and as persons convinced of their mistakes, both of the *presbyterian* cause & Interest which they opposed, and the *Episcopal* which they owned, have thought it their duty so to do, though to the exposing themselves to the Reproaches and other Persecutions of the *Episcopal* party, in their greatest power. And it is indeed very observable, that those who intertain prejudices against the *presbyterian Government*: are either Young Men who never saw it in its integrity, and living under a Government contrary to it, have not heard any other account of it, then of the failings and exorbitancies of some of that Profession, which are not the native product of their Principles, but such excesses as the Bias of the Age and Circumstances they lived in drove them into, or else old Turncoats and violent Persecutors, who to justify their change of their Profession and their Persecution of these who adhere to it, make it their work to fix an Odium on *Presbytery*, and by their frequent impudence in reproaching it have at last deluded themselves into an obstinate belief of their own invented Calumnies.

Your last Reason is, (*That if the Church of England continue as it is, as undoubtedly it will, and Scotland be reduced to presbytery, then considering the boundless and restless spirit of presbytery, Scotland will impose sicut ante an Uniformity on England in Doctrine and Discipline, which will commence a new Civil War, the thoughts of which cannot but breed horror in all reasonable Men.*) Sir, The only Foundation of these your Apprehensions is the Solemn League tho you mention it not, which altho it be a touchy point, yet *presbyterians* can abundantly vindicate the same, so as to prevent the fears of all Judicious Men, whom they will desire to consider that it obliges the members of the *Church of Scotland*, to no other thing in reference to *England*, then what is Antecedently their duty towards it, and all other Reformed Churches by virtue of the Sympathy and Communion, that every

every part of the *Catholick Visible Church* ought to have with any other part of it; That its Obligation is to be measured by the general rules of Judgment, Truth and Righteousness; that it is chiefly obliging to oppose Popery, and to endeavour the peace and happiness of both Nations; and finally that it obligeth no Man to any thing, but what is proper to him in his station, and therefore all your fears of a *Civil War* betwixt *England* and *Scotland* from this ground, are but Melancholick Apprehensions, if so be that the *Prince of Orange* shall be King of *Britain*, and so long as he and the *English Parliament* think it inexpedient to seek, and he and the *Scotts Parliament* think it inexpedient to give assistance for the alteration of the *English Church Government* from *Episcopacy* to *Presbytry*. But many fear upon more solid Grounds that the house of Commons in *England* clip your Bishops wings by degrees, as either to rid the Nation of them at length without the assistance of *Scotland*, or else bring them to such a rollerable Mediocrity, as will render them more acceptable to all the *English Nation*, then a *Civil War* can be supposed will be to any *English Presbyterians*, who are so ballanced betwixt the opposition of these of the *Episcopal* persuasion in the one hand, and of the Independent, on the other; that there is no party in *England*, either more moderate or Cautious when they are.

Thus you see, how weak a Defence of our cause these your Reasons now appear to be, after they are considered, tho with more calmness and tenderness then you can expect from a *Presbyterian*, whole answer to them to your disgrace and our disadvantage, I wish may be prevented by this Friendly freedom of mine with you, and I would advise you to wait a little longer till there be some better product of the Labours of your Brethren who are studying this Controversie, harder then ever in order to a learned and elaborate Vindication of *Episcopacy*; and Refutation of *Presbytry*, to which if this paper can any way be subservient, I allow you to communicate it to your Brethren, that they may be the more sober & cautious in managing the controversie, but I pray you let it not come to the sight of any *Presbyterian*, lest they print it to the publick Affront of our cause, and I disswade you as your Friend from the Resolution that I hear you are upon of printing your Reasons, whatever emendations you make in them, for it is an old *Maxime in criss non movendum*, and the *Presbyterians* modest silence, amidst the present Advantages they have, will be more commended then any thing we can writ, for our vindication in the dangerous circumstances that we are in at present. And Sir, I am hopeful that you will not think your self disoblidged by this friendly Duty, from

Sir,

Your Real Friend and Humble Servant.

F I N I S.

